



Guidance Note: Parish Precept (Parish element of the Council Tax)

The Parish Council is a local authority in its own right. One of the statutory functions of the Parish Council is to set a budget, which in turn establishes the Precept (the amount of council tax charged to each household – calculated on a Band D Rating). It is the responsibility of the Parish Councillors to set the precept for the Parish Council. The precept should be set at an appropriate level to ensure the Council can deliver the services required and/or requested by local residents. The Council is legally required to maintain its assets to minimise the risk of accidents or incidents and to have adequate insurance in place. In accordance with NALC (National Association of Local Councils) issued guidance, the general reserves should be between 3 – 12 months of the annual budget. Members must be satisfied that the general reserves are sufficient to cover unforeseen expenditure during the year, which could include: the unexpected costs of dealing with Unauthorised Encampments on parish owned land, land management items, or a locum clerk etc. etc.

Worplesdon Parish Council has attained the Power of Competence (*Localism Act 2011*), which means that there is no financial restriction on the Council's spending. Currently, Parish Council precepts are not capped and there is an expectation, within the Local Government sector, that Parish Councils will take on devolved services, i.e. services no longer provided by the principal authorities (Borough and County Councils) e.g. cleaning bus shelters and road signs. The Borough Council has no jurisdiction over the Parish Council's precept. The Borough Council's role is merely to collect the council tax requested by the Parish Council. The council tax collected by the Borough Council on behalf of the Parish Council is paid over to the Parish Council in two instalments on 1 April and 1 October.